

REMARKS:

The Examiner is thanked for the Office Action of September 10, 2003, and for the courtesy of an interview on November 25, 2003. Applicant has amended claims 1, 14 and 23, and added new claim 24. No new matter has been added.

The phrase "meandering course" has been deleted from claim 1, as suggested by the Examiner during the interview. Claims 14 and 23 have been amended in response to the Examiner's rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. New claim 24 depends from claim 23, and further limits the claimed projections.

Claims 1-14, 16 and 18 were rejected as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,842,905 to Stech. During the interview, Examiner Egan agreed that the Stech reference does not disclose or suggest a textile web as claimed by Applicant. Additional explanation of a textile material was requested. A textile material typically includes textile elements such as filaments or fibers. Textile webs may be used in a printing machine, and are designed such that one or more strips of textile are progressively wound in a lengthwise direction to the textile web. The web sections may be comprised of structural fibers, for example in the form of a woven fabric. (See specification, page 2, lines 6-15). The '905 patent discloses molded or extruded interlocking pieces, as opposed to a fabric having a filament or fiber structure. (See '905 patent, column 3, lines 25-26 and Figures 1-6). Therefore, withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 15, 17 and 23 were rejected as being obvious over Stech.

Claims 19-22 were rejected as being obvious over Stech in view of Diaz-Kotti (U.S. Patent No. 4,798,760). Claims 1-5, 14-17 and 23 were rejected as being obvious over Paquin et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,240,608) in view of Schlueter, Jr. et al. (U.S. Patent No.

5,514,436). Claims 6-13 were rejected as being obvious over Paquin et al. in view of Schlueter, Jr. et al., and in further view of Thorton et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,440,515) and Paquin (U.S. Patent No. 6,350,336). Claims 18-22 were rejected as being obvious over Paquin et al. ('608) in view of Schlueter, Jr. et al., and further in view of Diaz-Kotti. All of these references were discussed and distinguished during the interview. (See Interview Summary Continuation Sheet).

With respect to the Paquin references (U.S. Patent Nos. 6,350,336 and 6,240,608), loops are arranged in a side-by-side relationship and abutted, one with the nest. (See '608 patent, column 4, lines 50-53). Paquin fails to disclose or suggest connecting adjacent lateral edges, wherein the lateral edges have interlocking projections and recesses connected by fasteners. In the present invention, the textile web includes web sections having lateral edges having alternating projections and recesses, as set forth in claim 1. Corresponding projections and recesses of adjacent sections are secured via fasteners, thereby eliminating overlapped portions. The overlapped or abutted edges of the product disclosed by Paquin may create flaws in the papermaking process. In addition, Paquin fails to disclose adhesive tape for fastening adjacent lateral edges, as in the present invention. Rather, Paquin provides for a heat-activated adhesive film used to attach the strip of top laminate layer material to the base fabric. (See '336 patent, column 3, lines 24-25).

U.S. Patent Nos. 5,514,436 to Schlueter, Jr. et al., and 6,440,515 to Thornton et al., are non-analogous art, as discussed during the interview. Specifically, both of these references relate to belts used in printing apparatuses, as opposed to a textile-covered web for a paper-making machine. Neither reference provides for a textile web. Rather, the

'436 patent provides that the seamed belt may be formed of photoreceptor materials, or thermoplastic or thermosetting belt materials. (See '436 patent, column 4, lines 30-35). The '515 patent discloses a layer formed from materials such as polyesters, polyurethanes, polyimides, polyvinyl chlorides, polyolefins, polyamides, polycarbonates, or acrylics. (See '515 patent, column 4, lines 59-64). In addition, neither reference discloses or suggests web sections that extend parallel to one another in a lengthwise direction with their lateral edges being attached to one another via fasteners, as claimed by Applicant. Rather, these references provide for a one piece belt having a transverse seam extending perpendicular to the lateral edges, with no fasteners securing the edges together.

Diaz-Kotti (U.S. Patent No. 4,798,760) fails to disclose lateral edges having corresponding projections and recesses, as in the present invention. In fact, the '760 patent does not relate to the securement of edges of web sections at all. (See Interview Summary Continuation Sheet). Rather, the '760 patent merely discloses a felt, as discussed in the specification at page 2, lines 15-18).

In light of the arguments set forth herein and discussed during the interview, Applicant submits that all pending claims are now in condition for allowance, and respectfully solicits same. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned should additional explanation or clarification be required.

Applicant also submits the requisite fee for additional claim 24. It is believed that no other fees are due with this submission. Should that determination be incorrect, then please debit Account No. 50-0548 and notify the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Schrot', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

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